

Legal Resources

The Marriage Family Law Handbook does not replace the advice of a knowledgeable attorney. These are some ways to find legal resources in your community:

- ♦ Ask a family member, friend, or coworker for a referral to a lawyer.
- ♦ Consult a lawyer referral service. See www.wsba.org, under “Resources for: The Public.”
- ♦ For self-help information on a variety of legal topics, see www.washingtonlawhelp.org.
- ♦ For those with low income who live outside King County, call the Northwest Justice Project’s CLEAR line at 1-888-201-1014.
- ♦ A list of legal service providers for those with low income who live within King County can be found by calling 211 or (206) 464-1519.
- ♦ Court forms and instructions can be downloaded at www.courts.wa.gov/forms/.

To obtain a complete copy of the Marriage Family Law Handbook, visit the Washington Courts Web site at <http://www.courts.wa.gov/>, under Resources, Publications, and Reports.



The Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) was established by the 1957 Legislature to “advance the efficient and effective operation of the Washington judicial system.” The agency operates under the direction and supervision of the Chief Justice of the Washington State Supreme Court, pursuant to Chapter 2.56 RCW.

For more information, visit www.courts.wa.gov

Marriage Family Law Handbook 2012

Summary



Understanding the laws on
marriage and divorce in
Washington State

2012 Marriage Family Law Handbook Summary



The Family Law Handbook was developed to help you understand family law in Washington State.

The Legislature initially directed the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to create a Family Law Handbook for individuals getting a marriage license. The Legislature later directed county clerks to distribute the Handbook to individuals filing for, or responding to, an action to dissolve their marriage. This procedure is commonly called a divorce.

The Handbook may help you understand the rights and responsibilities spouses have to each other and any children during and after the marriage.

The Marriage Family Law Handbook may help you understand the rights and responsibilities spouses have to each other and any children during and after the marriage.

Chapters in the Handbook include:

- ♦ MARRIAGE IN WASHINGTON STATE
- ♦ PRENUPTIAL AGREEMENTS
- ♦ ENDING A MARRIAGE
- ♦ PROPERTY RIGHTS: DIVIDING ASSETS AND DEBT
- ♦ SPOUSAL MAINTENANCE (ALIMONY)
- ♦ THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN
- ♦ SHARED PARENTING FOR DIVORCING PARENTS
- ♦ PRESUMPTIONS OF PARENTAGE AND MARRIAGE
- ♦ RELOCATION OF CHILDREN
- ♦ CHILD SUPPORT
- ♦ DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- ♦ CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT
- ♦ DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS
- ♦ COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Community Resources and Helpful Web Sites

- ♦ Pre-marital and couples counseling.
- ♦ Couples support groups sponsored by religious organizations.
- ♦ Stronger Families Web site at www.strongerfamilies.org.
- ♦ Community Health Departments and Districts. See www.doh.wa.gov or call the health department or district listed in your local directory.
- ♦ The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), see www1.dshs.wa.gov or call your local DSHS Community Services Office.
- ♦ Support Groups — A list of local, state, and national resources for families can be found at <http://parenting.wsu.edu/resources>.